

ANIMAL LAW SECTION

Respectfully submits the following position on:

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SB 0239

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The Animal Law Section is not the State Bar of Michigan itself, but rather a Section which members of the State Bar choose voluntarily to join, based on common professional interest.

The position expressed is that of the Animal Law Section only and is not the position of the State Bar of Michigan.

To date, the State Bar does not have a position on this matter.

The total membership of the Animal Law Section is 243.

The position was adopted after an electronic discussion and vote. The number of members in the decision-making body is 15. The number who voted in favor to this position was 14. The number who voted opposed to this position was 0.

Report on Public Policy Position

Name of Section:

Animal Law Section

Contact person:

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Bill Number:

SB 0239 (Robertson) Animals; other; breed discrimination; eliminate. Creates new act.

Date position was adopted:

May 11, 2015

Process used to take the ideological position:

Position adopted after an electronic discussion and vote

Number of members in the decision-making body:

15

Number who voted in favor and opposed to the position:

14 Voted for position

0 Voted against position

0 Abstained from vote

1 Did not vote (absent)

Position:

Support

Explanation of the position, including any recommended amendments:

The State Bar of Michigan Animal Law Section supports SB 239, which would prohibit local units of government from enacting rules pertaining to dogs based on "breed, perceived breed, or type." The bill strikes a balance by expressly allowing local units of government to enact rules that "place[] restrictions or impose[] additional requirements on dogs or dog owners." However, by requiring that any restrictions or requirements be breed neutral, this bill ensures fairness and does not allow local government to interfere with residents' ownership interests in specific breeds or types of dogs based on prejudice. Breed-specific legislation should be prohibited because it has been shown to be ineffective in achieving local governments' stated goal of protecting the public, it is expensive to enforce, and it results in dogs that are not problematic being euthanized or rehomed and separated from their human families.

The text of any legislation, court rule, or administrative regulation that is the subject of or referenced in this report. <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?2015-SB-0239>